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MIND THE GAP

METRO TAKES A LOOK AT THE PHENOMENON OF 'MANSPREADING' ON PUBLIC TRANIST, WHICH HAS SPARKED A 'HOW TO RIDE' CAMPAIGN IN NEW YORK, AND A DEBATE AMONG TTC RIDERS IN TORONTO PAGE 4

The World Juniors: A preview of what to expect on the ice

Connor McDavid scores high points for character, Curtis Lazar is 'honoured' by being named captain, and lesser-known names could make a big impact PAGES 34 & 36

A roof for homeless pet owners

'Nowhere else.' Those living on the streets of Toronto with their beloved animal friends have a single option

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
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There's only one place Jessica Anani, homeless at 23, can go.

Despite a Toronto shelter system with space for more than 4,000 people, Fred Victor Bethlehem United Shelter is the only place that will take Anani and her dog, DJ, too.

"We had nowhere else," Anani said.

Rabbits, fish, cats and dogs are also welcome, said shelter manager Danielle Ashby.

"We see a wide variety of animals, from tabbies, Siamese, Maine Coons, pugs, German shepherds, Huskies and Jack Russells," she said, all of them doted on and spoiled with treats.

Every day the shelter fields calls from people hoping for one of its 70 spots, and about 15 are turned away every week. The shelter even sees walk-ins, despite being located in North York, far from the downtown core.

Other shelters — except extreme-weather drop-in centres — don't allow pets because of space requirements and the challenge of meeting health and safety regulations in the 24-hour environment, said Patricia Anderson, with the city's Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division.

Jessica Anani and her dog, DJ, at the city's only pet-friendly homeless shelter. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

But, Anderson said, that could change. Adding to the pet-friendly roster is "an important factor under consideration" as the city makes long-term plans for the shelter system, she said, noting there's a growing awareness of the positive impact pets can have on a homeless person's life.

While no one's crunched the numbers locally, U.S. studies have shown an estimated five to 10 per cent of homeless people have cats or dogs. In some parts of the country, the number is as high as 24 per cent, according to research cited by Nevada-based nonprofit Pets of the Homeless.

"The demand, especially around the holidays, is heartbreaking," said Ashby. "As the weather gets colder, we forget that those people sleeping on the street also have pets that are hungry and cold and needing holiday cheerfulness and shelter."

Ashby said they're trying to help in other ways, even if there is no room.

"Many homeless who have pets who come to our house during the holidays will be given access to a counsellor who will support the client in finding and sustaining affordable housing or counselling," she said.

Tucked into the side of a church, across from a strip mall and near a large park, the shelter is removed from the rhythms and temptations of inner city life, something shelter staff said can be helpful for clients looking to make a change.

Everyone who stays there is required to work on a plan aimed at finding housing and financial stability. Staff looks after the pets while people look for a job or a place to stay.

The shelter also offers access to free grooming and lower rates for veterinary care and pet training. There are tubs of endless dog food, cat food and cat litter.

"Our clients put their pets first," Ashby said, including buying pet food before feeding themselves.

Anani had been borrowing money for hotel rooms and staying with friends before she found out about the shelter.

"There should be more shelters like this that allow animals in," she said. "It's upsetting that this is the only one."

More from Jessica Anani and others using the city's only homeless shelter for people with dogs, pages 6-7.

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Toronto group calls for stay on deportation during Ebola crisis

The Citizen Action Commission. Petition also seeks changes to aid those back home

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A Toronto-based group is leading an effort to put a moratorium on deportations and speed up immigration applications for people with ties to three Western African countries battling Ebola.

About 200 people from across Canada signed a petition calling for swift action on applications regarding people from Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The petition was sent to Minister of Immigration Chris Alexander last month. Specifically, it mentions expediting permanent-resident applications for spouses and common-law partners along with the renewal of things such as work permits.

"It's a lot of suffering for people whose spouses are left in this whole Ebola crisis as they wait for the papers to come through," said Amadou Barry.

Barry helped lead the effort with other Guineans living in Toronto. They're part of a group called the Citizen Action Commission.

The petition also asks that Canada waive fees for immigration services and start processing visa applications, which were frozen because of Ebola concerns.

Barry, who still has family in Guinea, said the economy has been at a standstill in West African countries affected by the outbreak.

"If some of our people here are not allowed to work and bring help back home, the situation will be even more catastrophic," he said.

Calls to the immigration ministry were not immediately returned.

Severity

The number of Ebola cases confirmed so far is nearing 20,000, with a death toll upwards of 7,000, according to the World Health Organization.

- Immigration Canada still advises travelers to avoid non-essential travel to Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

Huge misunderstanding, racial profiling on flight cost client dearly, says lawyer

Sohill Agha, with his lawyer Saron Gebresellassi, right, and mother by his side, outside Brampton court Monday. ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mischief charges have been dropped against a 23-year-old man whose overheard cellphone conversation on a plane bound for England led to him being kicked off the flight and arrested.

Sohill Agha was aboard an Air Canada airplane at Pearson International Airport in September when another passenger raised concerns with the flight crew about what that passenger heard.

His lawyer said Monday the comments that raised concern were uttered by the person he was on the phone with and not Agha himself.

"It was just a huge mistake and a misunderstanding and it has cost him a lot," said Saron Gebresellassi, Agha's lawyer, in a media conference outside the Brampton courthouse Monday.

She said nearby passengers overhead the remark and assumed Agha made it.

Race

"He was automatically distrusted."

Saron Gebresellassi, Sohill Agha's lawyer, on the racial profiling she says he faced

"The fact is there was racial profiling. It didn't help that he was of Middle Eastern origin and people were frightened," said Gebresellassi.

She did not specify what form any further complaints or legal action would take.

"All options are on the table," said Gebresellassi.

Agha, who grew up in Mississauga, was on his way to London to begin studying law at the University of Leicester. As a result of the charges, he's had to delay his studies and is still attempting to get his tuition refunded.

"This has been a very, very surreal experience — I can't emphasize that enough. It's a trial that stopped my dream of studying law.... I have since then been attempting to pick up the pieces and reconstruct something out of what remains," Agha said in a public statement.

Police were called; they removed Agha and searched the plane. The captain announced that the man was having a conversation "about bombs," according to another passenger who was on the flight and spoke with Torstar News Service in September.

The plane broke out in whistles and applause when the man who had complained to the airline re-boarded the flight after speaking with police, the passenger told Torstar. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Toronto commuters debate 'manspreading' on transit

Hot topic. Some say men spreading their legs must stop, while others say the term is sexist

LUKE SIMCOE
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Are you a manspreader?
Having your knees more than four inches apart on the subway may result in getting side-eye from fellow riders.

Metro staffers act out manspreading. Transit riders say manspreading, which has sparked a "how to ride" campaign on New York's transit system, is also a problem in Toronto. PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID VAN DYKE

How should a man sit on the TTC?

"Keep your knees no more than four inches apart. Maybe six inches, but that's it," said Louise Fox, an etiquette coach in Toronto.

As New York's Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) gets set to unveil a series of ads targeting "manspreading," Fox and her fellow TTC riders are up in arms about spread legs.

Manspreading — men seated with their legs far enough apart to take space away from other passengers — is the latest transit transgression to draw public ire. While the stance may be comfortable, critics say it's rude and can be distressing for female riders.

And, of course, it's happening on the TTC.

"You're taking up more than your fair share of space. It's inconsiderate to others, nevermind the visual," Fox said.

In New York, outrage over manspreading has led the MTA to launch a campaign targeting riders whose seating posture is too luxurious.

"Dude ... Stop the Spread," is the tagline.

"I love the fact the MTA is doing this whole thing on manners," said Charles MacPherson, a.k.a. Charles the Butler, who provides etiquette training to hospitality staff. "I think it would be fabulous if the TTC did a similar campaign."

MacPherson isn't alone.

Since news of the MTA ads broke, Twitter users in Toronto have been raising the same issue with the TTC.

"Would love if the #TTC could make a poster that illustrates how subway manspreading and nail clipping are wrong," tweeted Sabreena Delhon.

Not everyone agrees it's even an issue, though. In a conversation thread on Reddit, some users dismissed the criticism or called it sexist.

Quoted

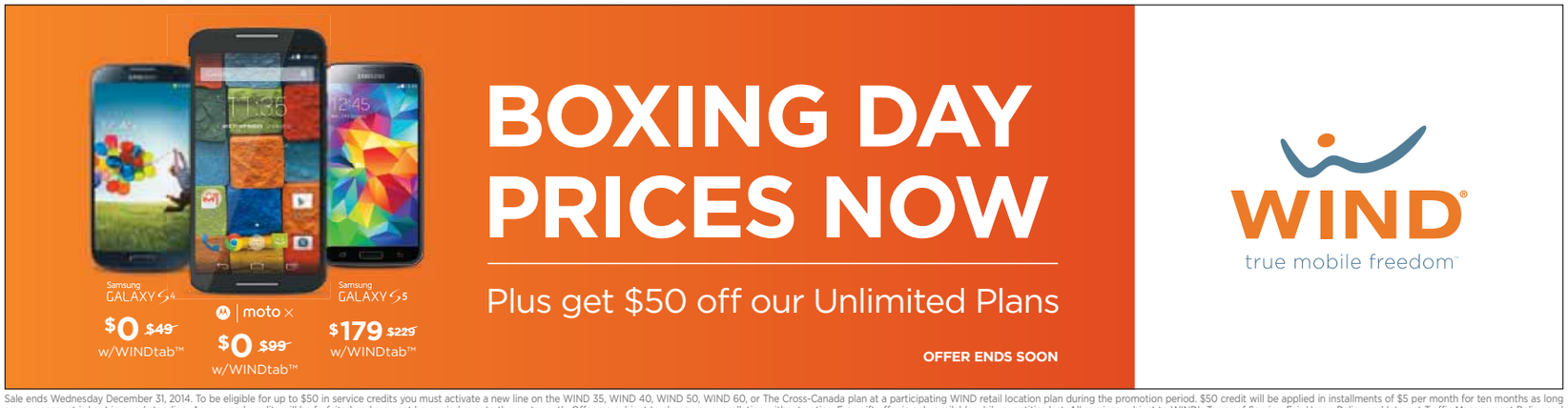
"Those may be the family jewels, but we don't want to see them."

Toronto etiquette coach Louise Fox on manspreading

"It's basic anatomy. Men have some extra bits between their legs that make sitting with their legs far apart more comfortable. If he's in your way, you can just tell him," wrote one Redditor.

However, Fox said it's unfair to force other riders to confront you just to get their share of a seat.

"In a perfect world, maybe you say something," she said. "But it's uncomfortable to have to bring that up. It would be a lot easier if you just sat properly."



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Help United Way give the gift of warmth

Warmest Wishes.
Toronto-specific initiative has gifts of warm clothing and food from $10 to $125 that go directly to those most in need

Torontonians have dodged seriously inclement weather so far this winter, but as day turns into night, more snow and subzero temperatures are coming.

That will also mean plenty of snow to shovel on cold days, and pools of slush when it warms up. Kids will leave home with hats and mitts and return without them.

These are some of the realities Torontonians face each winter. For the more than half a million residents living in poverty, life is much harsher, as many struggle with cold, hunger and homelessness.

That's why United Way Toronto is asking residents who can to dig deep into their pockets this season to give a gift that keeps on giving by supporting Warmest Wishes. It's a Toronto-specific initiative that allows individuals to purchase something tangible for someone in need and send a gift of clothing or food. A Warmest Wishes gift will make a difference in the lives of those most vulnerable, among them children and people who are disabled, elderly or hungry.

"The holiday season is a very natural time for people to reflect on how they can give back to the community," said Susan McIsaac, president and CEO of United Way Toronto. "Warmest Wishes is a great opportunity for people to send a meaningful gift to an individual or family that is struggling in our city. A warm wish provides some of the basics people need to get through the tough winter months, necessities like food and clothes. These gifts are having an impact on people's lives during a time when they are looking for help."

Supporting Warmest Wishes is also a stress-free way to make a difference in the lives of others. A gift of $25 provides a person with a Warm Wear Package, which includes a tuque, scarf, gloves and socks.

A $50 donation can provide a person with a warm winter coat, while $100 provides meals for a month, five days a week.

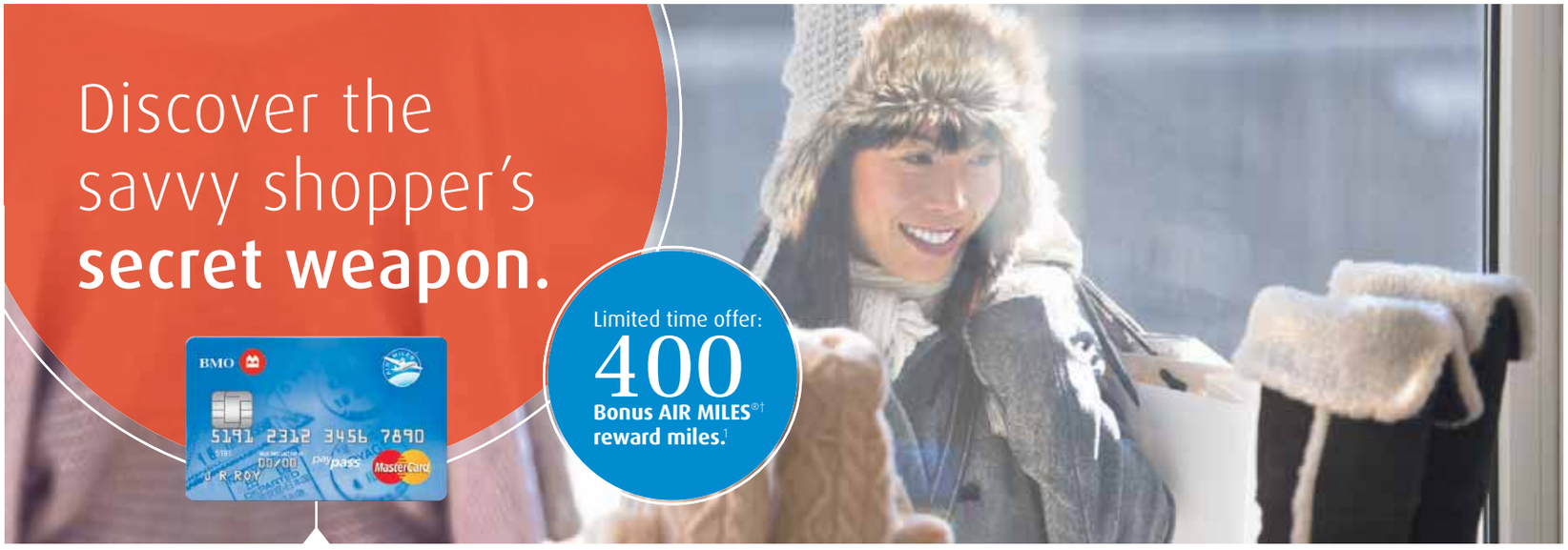
With gifts ranging from $10 to $125, Warmest Wishes makes it easy to keep people cared for throughout the season.

This year's Warmest Wishes gift catalogue got a special present with a matching gift from the P. and L. Odette Charitable Foundation, which will match each donation made until Jan. 9, up to $100,000.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A time to give

There's also time to support the United Way Toronto and its goal of raising $117 million in 2014. Funds will help support 200 United Way community partner agencies across the city. To donate, go to unitedwaytoronto.com or call 416-777-200.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4 out of 10 people say their 'hood is getting richer

According to a new poll, four in 10 Toronto residents believe their neighbourhood is becoming more affluent while fewer than two in 10think they're living in a declining part of the city.

The Forum Research poll surveyed 1,001 Toronto residents. The results are based on the perceptions of respondents.

No census data or other statistics on household income for different parts of the city were used by Forum.

The results are considered accurate plus or minus three per cent, 19 times out of 20.

The poll also shows that people's perceptions of the relative economic trend in their neighbourhood varies considerably, depending on which part of Toronto they live in.

In Scarborough, 23 per cent of respondents believe their neighbourhood is getting more wealthy, compared to 63 per cent of residents in Toronto or East York who think their neighbourhood is getting more wealthy.

In Etobicoke, 36 per cent of respondents see their neighbourhood as growing richer, and in North York 34 per cent of those polled believe the area they live in is getting wealthier.

By the numbers

77%

77 per cent of those who said they were in the highest income bracket thought their neighbourhood was getting richer.

Those who responded as being in the highest household income bracket, $250,000-plus, are the most likely to think their neighbourhood is becoming more affluent — 77 per cent.

That compares to 41 per cent of respondents across all income brackets who think their neighbourhoods are getting more wealthy.

Only 16 per cent of respondents across the city, representing all income brackets combined, believe their neighbourhood is getting less wealthy. The poll also found that 36 per cent of all respondents believe their neighbourhood is staying the same while eight per cent don't know.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

‘It’s everything for people’

Tales from Toronto’s only pet-friendly homeless shelter, Fred Victor Bethlehem United

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Jessica Anani and DJ. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

1 Jessica Anani and DJ, her shih tzu-Jack Russell-sheltie mix, have been living at Fred Victor since Nov. 3.

DJ was the troublemaker of the litter. He’s occasionally yappy and will eat only Cesar-brand dog food, but he means everything to Anani, 23.

“I talk to DJ at night sometimes,” she said. “It’s comforting. You know they’re loyal.”

Anani dropped out of culinary school to take care of her sick father. When that didn’t work out, she found herself with little money and no home.

“This is the closest thing to homeless I’ve ever been,” she said. “The first few days I was very emotional.”

But the shelter is not what she thought it would be.

“I got it so wrong,” she said. “People here, I would never have guessed that they needed to be in a shelter.”

Anani doesn’t plan to stay long. She’s interviewed for a line-cook job at a Moxie’s restaurant and aims to be living on her own early next year.

2 Maria P. (she did not want to give her last name) and her dog Milou were living in her car before they came to Fred Victor.

“I lost my place late July,” she said. “All my money would go for gas and Milou’s food.”

Maria, 49, had been working a construction job to get by.

“I lost my job and because of that I was late for payment for my rent,” she said. “Unfortunately some promises from friends didn’t come to action. I found myself with no place.”

A few nights turned cold,

Maria P. and Milou. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

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Florance Akey and Baby. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

Milou was shivering, so Maria turned on the heat. That drained the car battery, and most of her money went to replace it.

After 20 days in the car, Fred Victor finally had a spot for her.

She'd never give up Milou, her well-behaved two-year-old shih-poo (a shih tzu-poodle cross), she said.

"He loves me. I'm his protector," she said.

"I'm not going to stay here for long," she added. "My life is going to change drastically, and I'm hopeful."

3

The rambunctious Australian shepherd Baby and her owner, Florance Akey, moved to Toronto this fall.

Akey, 47, was living with her sister and brother-in-law, a situation that deteriorated last spring, she said. So she and Baby lived on the streets and in shelters in Kingston before Akey decided to move.

"I wanted to get on with my own life," she said.

She ended up at the Street Haven shelter downtown, while Baby was in an animal shelter in Kingston. They reunited when Akey got into Fred Victor.

"It's a bed to sleep in. It's everything for people," she said. "This place has welcomed me and my girl, and I appreciate it."

Shelter staff hope to find Akey housing beginning in early January.

4

It took Thom Horning three nights on the street before he found room at the Fred Victor shelter.

Horning and his pomeranians — Berry and Polar — came to Toronto from Vancouver in March.

He spent a night near the Toronto airport, and another one in the St. Patrick subway station.

"When I came down I knew I was putting myself on the street. I knew nobody down here," he said.

People asked him why he had expensive dogs if he was living on the street, and Horning told them he had bought them in Vancouver, when he had an apartment.

"I told them 90 per cent of my money goes on them, and if I have to I'll starve," he said.

"I would never give them up. They're my girls. I consider them family."

Shelter staff helped Horning find housing, and he's been living on his own since August.

Thom Horning with Berry and Polar. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

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Toronto police spokesman Mark Pugash says there have been no direct threats to officers in this city.

DALE BRAZAO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Police urged to 'be mindful' of threats

No extra precautions. Spokesman says they've received no direct threat after U.S. officers gunned down

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Toronto police say they aren't following in the steps of U.S. forces taking extra safety precautions in the wake of targeted attacks.

Officers are being reminded, however, as always, to "be mindful of any threat where there is information," spokesman Mark Pugash said.

"I can tell you that there is currently no direct threat to the city or to our police officers," he noted. "If there's any information of concern we might make changes to the arrangements we have in place."

Three U.S. police officers were killed over the weekend — two in New York on Saturday and one Sunday in Florida.

Authorities said the New York gunman announced on social media that he planned to kill officers to avenge the New York City death of Eric Garner, who was killed in a police chokehold earlier this year.

As a result, police officers in some areas were told to, among other things, double up when answering calls.

There has been a growing public resentment of police force in the U.S., following the recent deaths of two unarmed black men during altercations with police. The mass protests that sprang up have sometimes turned violent.

Pugash said similar demonstrations in Toronto have been calm due especially to the existing relationship between the force and the community.

"We have a long history of facilitating orderly and peaceful protests, and we haven't seen the sentiments here that we've seen in the U.S.," he said. "There is mutual concern.

"But we are very mindful that police relationships with our groups in the city are very important," said Pugash. "We've made progress in improving those relationships, we still have more to do and will continue to work very hard on it."

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Raptors' new logo not yet on gear

Days before Christmas. 'Not to have the merchandise available is just completely amateur,' says marketing professor

As shoppers browsed the shelves at Real Sports Apparel in the Air Canada Centre Monday afternoon, they had hundreds of Raptors-themed goods to choose from.

But among the jerseys, sweatshirts, headbands and socks, there was something that couldn't be found: anything with the team's new logo, which was unveiled Friday.

Coming just days before Christmas, in the heart of gift-shopping season, not giving fans a chance to buy gear with the heavily criticized new logo is a baffling decision, according to marketing expert Alan Middleton.

"Why on earth would you do that? Not to have the merchandise available is just completely amateur," said Middleton, a marketing professor at York University's Schulich School of Business.

While a few T-shirts featuring a "prototype" of the new logo were given out on social media as part of in-game promotions over the weekend, a n official from Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment said new jerseys won't be available until early summer. Other apparel with the new logo will be available before the beginning of the 2015-2016 season.

Merchandise featuring the Raptors' new logo. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Among the new apparel will be several items that are part of a collaboration between Drake and Philadelphia-based sports apparel maker Mitchell and Ness.

The new logo is part of a wider team rebranding, including the "We the North" campaign by creative agency Sid Lee. Boosting sales of apparel is one of the biggest business reasons why sports teams rebrand themselves or come out with new logos, Middleton said.

The logo — featuring stylized claw marks on a basketball — was released last week, with a colour version posted on the team's Facebook page, then pulled down to be replaced by a black and white version.

Late Friday afternoon, the team tweeted out colour versions, and confirmed that a red, black and silver version would be the primary logo. A black and gold version will be the secondary logo.

It drew heated criticism from many fans, who thought it looked a little too much like the logo of the Brooklyn Nets, who bumped the Raptors from the playoffs last spring.

While the colour version makes it less like the Nets' strictly black and white logo, it's the Raptors' own fault for the misunderstanding, says GTA-based logo expert Chris Creamer, who runs SportsLogos.net. For one thing, they should have released the colour versions at the same time.

"The fans made the connection to Brooklyn (because of the black and white version), and they won't let it go. The Raptors botched this launch," said Creamer, who said he was underwhelmed at the redesigned logo when he saw it.

"It's kind of like mashed potatoes. I don't hate it, but 'safe' would be a good word to describe it," said Cramer, who nonetheless was pleased with at least one aspect of the redesign: The lack of a Raptor.

"Personally, I've never been a fan of the '90s cartoon dinosaur, on the logo or the uniform," he said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Kinder Surprise. Former paralegal smuggled pot in kids' treats: Judge

A former paralegal has been found guilty of smuggling eight Kinder eggs stuffed with marijuana to an inmate at the Maplehurst Correctional Institution.

After an 11-day trial, Ontario Court Justice Lesley Baldwin found that during a September 2011 meeting with Mohamed Sheikh-Hussein, North York-based paralegal Junior Ebagua, 51, handed over a duct-taped sock "the size of a small football" containing nine Kinder Surprise eggs. Eight contained marijuana and one contained tobacco.

Ebagua's paralegal licence was revoked in 2012 for several reasons, including failure to report he had been charged with a criminal offence and failure to comply with the Law Society of Upper Canada investigation into complaints about him.

Sheikh-Hussein pleaded guilty to possession of marijuana for the purpose of trafficking in January 2013 and was sentenced to one day in addition to five months' time served. He testified that he used a phone number given to him by a fellow inmate to set up a deal to obtain 80 grams of marijuana.

He said that on Sept. 12, 2011, Ebagua visited him at Maplehurst in an interview room reserved for the use of lawyers and paralegals to meet their clients. Ebagua was not representing Sheikh-Hussein, who was in jail on a robbery charge — too serious an offence for a paralegal to take on.

After the visit, Sheikh-Hussein testified he was strip-searched by a prison guard and, knowing he was "caught red-handed," removed the sock from his boxers and handed it over. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Holiday flower show takes over Allan Gardens

Downtown Toronto's Allan Gardens Conservatory is delighting merrymakers with its holiday flower show, which is considered its biggest of the year. It features, among other things, more than 30 varieties of poinsettias and continues into mid-January. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

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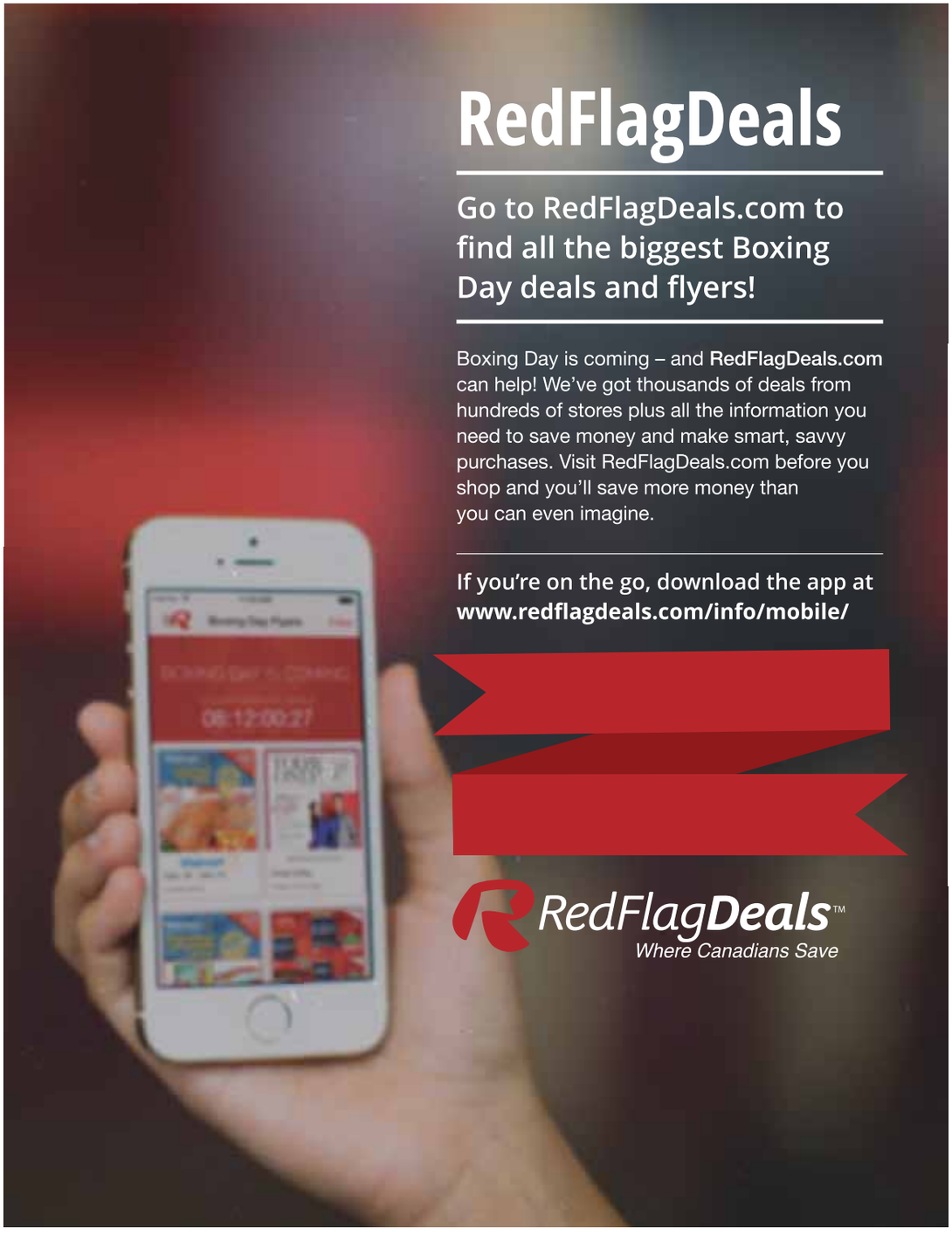
Incidents involving TTC vehicles

Data obtained by Torstar News Service in July showed that TTC vehicles have been involved in almost 18,000 collisions since 2009, including almost 5,000 that were deemed preventable by investigators.

Here are some of the incidents TTC vehicles have been involved in over the past few months:

- **On Dec. 19**, a TTC bus was involved in a hit-and-run in Scarborough that killed Amaria Diljohn, 14. The 27-year-old bus driver later turned himself in to police but has not been charged.
- **On Dec. 16**, a woman was taken to hospital with non-life-threatening injuries after being hit by a TTC bus at Yonge Street and Eglinton Avenue.
- **On Dec. 5**, a female pedestrian was taken to hospital in serious condition after being hit and pinned by a TTC bus at York University.
- **On Nov. 9**, A person was killed and nine others injured when a TTC bus hit a car and then crashed into a CIBC building near Kipling Avenue north of Rexdale Boulevard.
- **On Nov. 4**, a video posted on YouTube appears to show a TTC bus running a red light, southbound at Morningside Avenue and Ellesmere Road.
- **On Oct. 21**, a TTC bus was caught on video running a red light and almost hitting a pedestrian at Lake Shore Boulevard West and Superior Avenue in Etobicoke. The bus driver was later fired.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Amaria Diljohn, 14, died Friday after she was hit by a TTC bus at Finch Ave. E. and Neilson Rd. CONTRIBUTED

Teen's death fast-tracks TTC review

Study began weeks ago. Transit chief says he asked that the review be accelerated

The TTC is conducting a "comprehensive review" of recruitment, training, recertification and monitoring programs for bus and streetcar operators, the transit commission announced Monday.

The announcement comes three days after 14-year-old Amaria Diljohn was killed at Finch Avenue East and Neilson Road, in what Toronto police are calling a hit-and-run involving a TTC bus. The 27-year-old bus driver turned himself in to police. Charges have yet to be laid.

"The tragic death of Amaria Diljohn Friday evening has shaken all of us at the TTC," said TTC CEO Andy Byford in a statement. "I want to give the public, customers and all TTC employees assurance that safety is, and will remain, paramount in all that we do."

The review actually began several weeks ago "following reports of TTC vehicles disobeying red lights," but Byford has now asked that it be accelerated, according to the statement. A report with findings and recommendations will be presented to the TTC board.

Byford said the Friday fatality "reinforced" the need for a review.

Byford said he has committed new resources and accelerated the review, which he expects to be complete around February.

The TTC said it continues to co-operate fully with the police investigation into Amaria's death.

Over at Woburn Collegiate Institute in Scarborough, teachers and school community members gathered to remember the popular Grade 9 girl on Monday.

"She was a lovely, lovely girl. Very studious, happy, bubbly, great personality," said Sheldeen Schoberg, Amaria's English teacher.

Amaria was a leader in the classroom, sang in the choir and was "always, always smiling," recalled Christina Mohan, Amaria's geography teacher.

Support staff was at the school on Monday to meet with the students who wanted to talk — around 20 had stopped by as of noon. Social workers may be back at the school in January.

Woburn principal Karen Hume said the school will wait until January to decide how it will remember Amaria.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Releasing electronic data may 'create havoc': Minister

Fear of falsification. Minister Tony Clement says that some electronic data could be altered if released

The Conservative cabinet minister responsible for freedom of information says some federal data cannot be released to the public in electronic format because people might alter it and spread falsehoods.

There's a fear people could "create havoc" by changing the statistical information, said Treasury Board president Tony Clement.

Federal agencies hold a vast array of data on everything from immigrants held in detention to use of force by RCMP officers. Some researchers have requested data kept in electronic format, only to receive it as a paper printout.

That makes it virtually impossible for the recipient to sort and filter the data to identify patterns and trends.

The Access to Information Act says federal agencies must provide timely access to records in the format requested.

Fred Vallance-Jones, who teaches journalism at the University of King's College in Halifax, said Clement's stance effectively violates the rights of requesters.

Clement's concern about data manipulation is "specious" because, technically speaking, any federal document — not just a database — could be falsified by someone with ill intent, Vallance-Jones said.

Clement has championed the growth of the government's online data portal, encouraging federal agencies to disclose data in easily sortable formats.

However, some data sets cannot be released in a spreadsheet or similar electronic format, Clement said.

"That's the balancing act that we have to have, that certain files, you don't want the ability to create havoc by making it changeable online," Clement said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Halifax

Dalhousie closing public dental clinic

Dalhousie University's faculty of dentistry is temporarily closing its public dental clinic as part of its response to accusations that male students posted misogynistic messages online about their female peers.

The university says the step is one of several measures being taken so that patients, students, faculty and staff are able to return to classes and clinics in a safe and supportive environment.

University president Richard Florizone has said 13 men in the fourth-year of the dentistry program were members of a Facebook group where comments were posted. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadian teacher jailed in Indonesia set to start trial

Police officers escort child sexual abuse suspect Zainal Abidin, centre, before his trial on Monday at South Jakarta District Court in Jakarta, Indonesia. An Indonesian court has sentenced five janitors to up to eight years in prison over the rape of a kindergarten student at a prestigious international school. The janitors' sentences were delivered the day before Canadian teacher Neil Bantleman's trial was set to begin in Jakarta. Bantleman, who is also accused of sexually abusing students at the school, said he finds the janitors' sentence "devastating," according to his family. He has been in custody since July and has maintained his innocence. PHOTO: TATAN SYUFLANA/THE CANADIAN PRESS; TEXT: THE CANADIAN PRESS

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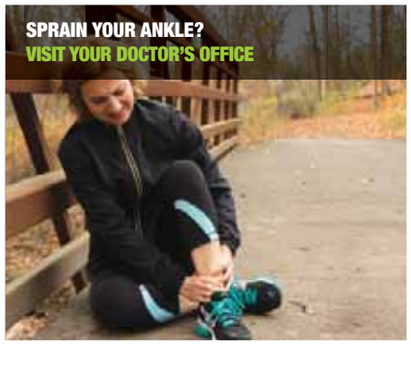

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Iraqi TV show forces man convicted of terrorism to face victims and families

'In the Grip of the Law.' The man, convicted in string of Baghdad car bombings, began weeping as cameras rolled

Haider Ali Motar was convicted of terrorism charges about a month ago for helping to carry out a string of Baghdad car bombings on behalf of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Now, the 21-year old is a reluctant cast member in a popular reality TV show.

"In the Grip of the Law," brings convicted terrorists face-to-face with victims in surreal encounters and celebrates the country's beleaguered security forces. The show, produced by state-run Iraqiyya TV, is among dozens of programs, cartoons and musical public service announcements aimed at shoring up support for the troops after their humiliating defeat last summer at the hands of ISIL, which now controls about a third of the country.

On a chilly, overcast day last week, the crew arrived at the scene of one of the attacks for which Motar was convicted, with a heavily armed escort in eight military pick-up trucks and Humvees. Passing cars clogged the road to watch the drama unfold, but were quickly shooed away by soldiers.

After being pulled from an armoured vehicle, a shackled Motar found himself face-to-face with the seething relatives of the victims of the attack. "Give him to me — I'll tear him to pieces," one of the relatives roared from behind a barrier.

Once the cameras were rolling, the show's host Ahmed Hassan quizzed the shackled prisoner. When Motar was confronted by one of the victims, a young man in a wheelchair who lost his father in one of the attacks, the convict began weeping, as the cameras rolled.

In this photo taken on Dec. 16, 2014, Haider Ali Motar, right, performs a scene from "In the Grip of the Law," a reality show produced by Iraqi state TV in Baghdad, Iraq. Motar was convicted of terrorism charges about a month ago for helping to carry out a string of Baghdad car bombings on behalf of ISIL. HADI MIZBAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Iraq has seen frequent car bombs and other attacks for over a decade, both before and after the withdrawal of U.S.-led troops at the end of 2011. But the message of the show is that the security forces will bring perpetrators to justice.

"We wanted to produce a program that offers clear and conclusive evidence, with the complete story, presented and shown to Iraqi audiences," Hassan said. "Through surveillance videos, we show how the accused parked the car, how he blew it up, how he carries out an assassination."

The episodes detail trails of evidence that lead security forces to make arrests.

"We show our audiences the pictures, along with hard evidence, to leave no doubts that this person is a criminal and paying for his crimes," Hassan said.

All of the alleged terrorists are shown confessing to their crimes in one-on-one interviews. Hassan said the episodes are only filmed after the men have confessed to a judge, insisting it is "impossible" that any of them are innocent.

Human rights groups have long expressed concern over airing confessions by prisoners, many of whom have been held incommunicado in secret facilities, citing the justice system as being flawed to the point detainees' rights are routinely violated and they would be uncomfortable to speak freely.

Security officials insist though their message is one of deterrence.

"Many of these terrorists feel a lot of remorse when they see the victims," said the senior intelligence officer overseeing the shoot, who declined to be named since he often works undercover. "When people see that, it makes them think twice about crossing the law."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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OPSEU SEFPO

Staff serenade oldest of zoo gorillas

The first gorilla born in a zoo is turning 58 with a celebration broadcast live to online viewers from her Ohio home.

The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium says the female western lowland gorilla, named Colo, is celebrating her birthday Monday with an Ohio-shaped cake made of peanut butter, applesauce, honey, shredded carrots with Greek yogurt frosting.

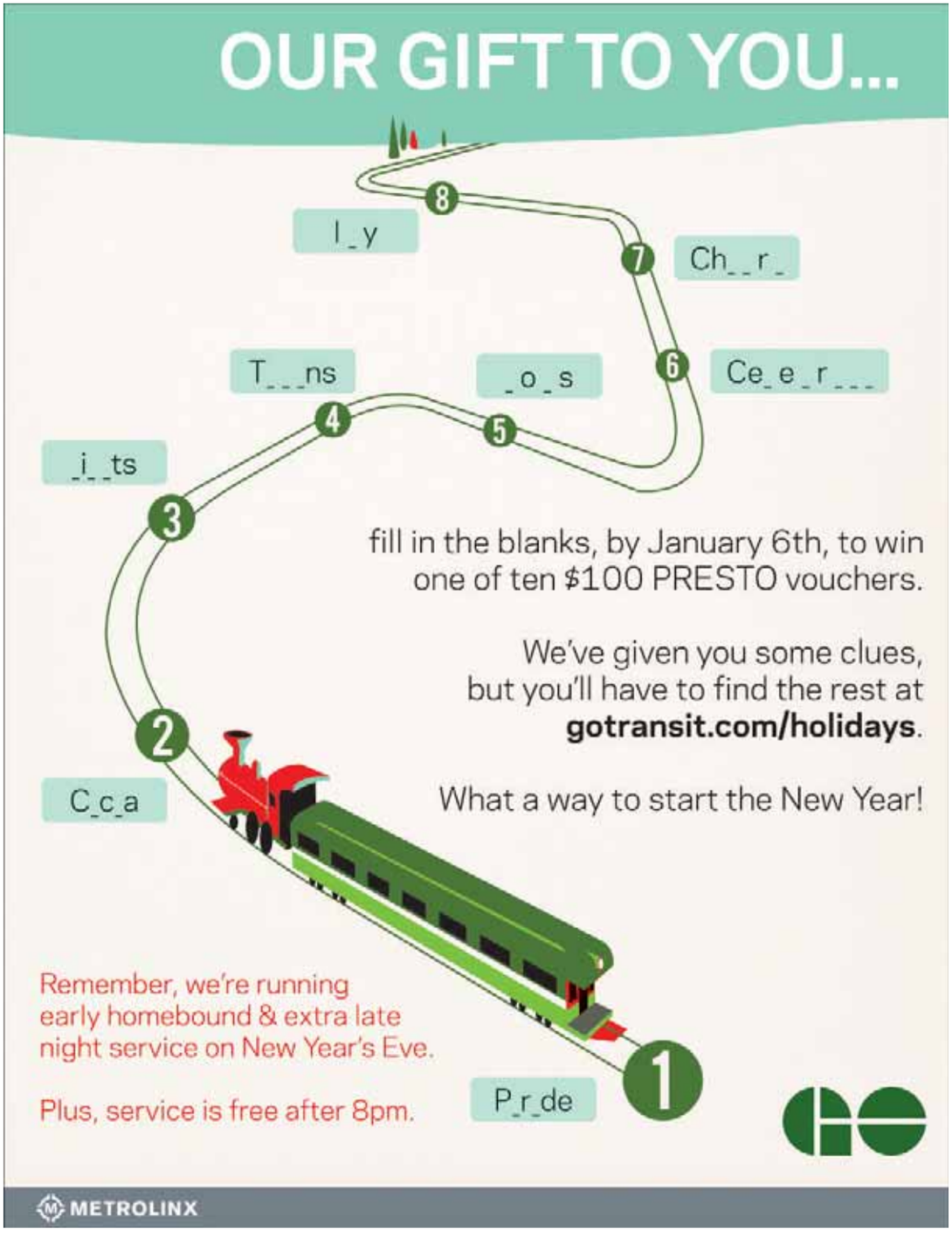
The zoo said its website would have video of Colo receiving the cake, opening presents of tomatoes and clementines and being serenaded by zoo staff and visitors.

Colo was born at the zoo in 1956. Officials there say she is the oldest gorilla in any zoo. Colo is a mother of three. Her family tree includes more than two dozen descendants living at zoos across the United States.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Colo, a lowland gorilla, sits in her enclosure at the zoo in Powell, Ohio.

COURTESY COLUMBUS ZOO AND AQUARIUM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE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Pope blasts inner circle

15 'ailments of the Curia'. Francis turns exchange of Christmas greetings into dressing down of Holy See's central administration

To the Catholic Church's "seven deadly sins," Pope Francis has added the "15 ailments of the Curia."

Francis issued a blistering indictment of the Vatican bureaucracy Monday, accusing the cardinals, bishops and priests who serve him of using their Vatican careers to grab power and wealth, of living "hypocritical" double lives and forgetting that they're supposed to be joyful men of God.

Ticking off 15 "ailments of the Curia" one by one, Francis urged the prelates sitting stone-faced before him in the marbled Sala Clementina to use the Christmas season to repent and atone and make the church a healthier, holier place in 2015.

Vatican watchers said they had never heard such a powerful, violent speech from a pope and suggested that it was informed by the results of a secret investigation ordered up by Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI in the aftermath of the 2012 leaks of his papers.

Benedict tasked three trusted cardinals to probe deep into the Vatican's backstabbing culture to root out what would have prompted a papal butler to steal incriminating documents and leak them to a journalist. Their report is known only to the two popes.

Francis had some zingers: How the "terrorism of gossip" can "kill the reputation of our colleagues and brothers in cold blood." How cliques can "enslave their members and become a cancer that threatens the harmony of the body" and eventually kill it off by "friendly fire." How some suffer from "spiritual Alzheimer's," forgetting what drew them to the priesthood in the first place.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hundreds win The Fat One

Owners of a lottery office in La Eliana, near Valencia in eastern Spain, celebrate Monday after a ticket they sold for 20 euros (about $28) won one of more than 100 first prizes worth 400,000 euros (about $570,000) in Spain's El Gordo (The Fat One) Christmas lottery. The world's biggest lottery has a total prize pot of 2.5 billion euros (about $3.6 billion). More than 100 of the top winning tickets were sold in an upper middle-class Madrid neighbourhood, 20 more purchased in the southern city of Cadiz and a handful sold in other cities across the nation. ALBERTO SAIZ/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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2181 Steeles Avenue West, Unit B10
363 Yonge Street
2300 Yonge Street, Unit S22, concourse level
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4841 Yonge Street
5150 Yonge Street, Unit G3
6064 Yonge Street
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Nigeria

Car bomb kills at least 20, injures 60

A car bomb exploded Monday at a bus station in Nigeria's northeastern city of Gombe, killing at least 20 people and injuring another 60, said rescue workers.

At least 20 people were "burned beyond recognition by the bomb explosion," and another 60 were hospitalized, said Red Cross official Abubakar Yakubu.

The explosion came in the early hours when the station was crowded with holiday travellers, said Deputy Superintendent Fwaje Atajiri.

Atajiri would not speculate over who was responsible though the attack bears all the hallmarks of Nigeria's homegrown Islamic extremist group, Boko Haram.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lethal injection

Arizona to change execution drugs

Arizona officials said Monday they are changing the drugs they use in executions after an inmate in July gasped repeatedly over the course of nearly two hours while being put to death.

Arizona no longer will use the combination of midazolam, a sedative, and hydromorphone, a pain killer, according to a letter to Gov. Jan Brewer from Department of Corrections Director Charles Ryan. The move comes as states have been scrambling to find new combinations of lethal drugs after European pharmaceutical companies restricted their distribution. Several prolonged executions this year have sparked debate over lethal injections in particular and executions in general. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oklahoma

Federal judge upholds lethal injection protocol

Oklahoma's lethal injection protocols are constitutional and the state can proceed with the scheduled executions of four death row inmates early next year, a federal judge ruled on Monday.

U.S. District Judge Stephen Friot denied a request for a preliminary injunction that was requested by a group of 21 Oklahoma death row inmates who argued the use of the sedative midazolam as the first drug in a three-drug combination the state administers risks subjecting them to unconstitutionally cruel and unusual punishment.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Halt debate until after funerals, N.Y. mayor says

Two officers killed. Shot inside patrol car

New York's mayor called on Monday for protests and political debate to pause until after funerals are held for the two officers who were shot and killed inside their patrol car this weekend by a man vowing retaliation for the deaths of black men at the hands of white police.

The killings came at a time when police nationwide are being criticized following Eric Garner's death in a New York officer's chokehold and 18-year-old Michael Brown's fatal shooting in Ferguson, Mo. Protests erupted in recent weeks after grand juries declined to charge the officers involved. On Monday, a prosecutor said a white Milwaukee police officer who was fired after he fatally shot a mentally ill black man in April won't face criminal charges.

"I think it's important that regardless of people's viewpoints that everyone step back," Mayor Bill de Blasio said in a speech at the Police Athletic League. "I think it's a time for everyone to put aside political debates, put aside protests, put aside all of the things that we will talk about in all due time."

Officers Wenjian Liu and Rafael Ramos were ambushed Saturday by a 28-year-old who wrote an Instagram post that he would put "wings on pigs." The suspect, Ishmaaiyl Brinsley, was black; the slain New York Police Department officers were Hispanic and Asian.

De Blasio said it was time to focus on the officers' grieving families; he and Police Commissioner William Bratton met with them Monday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"I think it's a time for everyone to put aside political debates, put aside protests, put aside all of the things that we will talk about in all due time." NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio

Glasgow garbage truck crashes into, kills six pedestrians

Emergency services attend the scene in George Square in Glasgow, Scotland, after six people were killed and several others injured when a garbage truck crashed into a group of pedestrians downtown Monday. The truck hit a number of pedestrians as it veered out of control along a crowded road in the city centre, Supt. Stewart Carle of Police Scotland said. DANNY LAWSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

North Korea. Country's online access crippled

North Korea experienced sweeping and progressively worse Internet outages extending into Monday, with one computer expert saying the country's online access is "totally down." The White House and the State Department declined to say whether the U.S. government was responsible.

President Barack Obama said Friday the U.S. government expected to respond to the hacking of Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc., which he described as an expensive act of "cyber vandalism" that he blamed on North Korea. Obama did not say how the U.S. might respond, and it was not immediately clear if the Internet connectivity problems represented the retribution.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Agenda. UN to address N. Korea's human rights

The UN Security Council placed North Korea's human rights situation on its agenda Monday, a groundbreaking step toward holding the nuclear-armed but poor country and leader Kim Jong Un accountable for alleged crimes against humanity.

This appears to be the first time that any country's human rights situation has been scheduled for ongoing debate by the UN's most powerful body. China and Russia protested the move, the boldest effort yet to confront Pyongyang over the issue.

An angry North Korea, now on the defensive against a U.S. accusation of hacking, has said it would refuse to recognize Monday's meeting.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Canada Ontario

Push to cut train staff from two to one in U.S.

Trend. Executives in America want to reduce the number of people aboard freight trains to one engineer

U.S. railroad execs want to put a single engineer in charge of trains that can take 20 minutes to pass through a crossing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

When American freight trains delivered cargo after the Second World War, the steam-belching beasts commonly had seven people aboard — an engineer, a conductor, up to four brakemen and a fireman.

Trains have since grown much longer, seemingly stretching to the horizon and often taking 20 minutes to pass through a crossing. And crews have been reduced in size — to five people in the 1970s and two in 1991.

Now U.S. railroads want to put a single person in charge of today's huge locomotives, taking another step toward a future in which the nation's rail-cargo system increasingly could resemble toy train sets — highly mechanized networks run by computers or distant controllers.

For the moment, freight trains generally have two people aboard — an engineer who drives the train and a conductor who oversees the long line of cars.

Railroad executives want to reduce that to a lone engineer, saying advances in safety systems, including a new automatic braking system under development, could minimize risks.

But labour groups and people who live near rail lines are skeptical.

"These trains are 7,000 tons going 50 m.p.h. You have to have two people," said J.P. Wright, an engineer for CSX railroad in Louisville, Ky. "It's mindboggling to me that the railroads would go this far with it." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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U.S. Industry spearheads drone safety campaign

Alarmed by increasing encounters between small drones and manned aircraft, drone industry officials said Monday they are teaming up with the U.S. government and model aircraft hobbyists to launch a safety campaign.

The campaign includes a website — www.knowbeforeyoufly.com — which advises both recreational and commercial drone operators of FAA regulations and how to fly their unmanned aircraft safely. The campaign was announced by Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International and the Small UAV Coalition, both industry trade groups, and the Academy of Model Aeronautics, which represents model aircraft hobbyists, in partnership with the Federal Aviation Administration.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"In just a few days, kids old and young will unwrap presents, and many of them — maybe tens of thousands — will have unmanned aircraft."

Michael Toscano, president of the unmanned vehicle association, said in a conference call with reporters

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Mom turns bed-wetting problem into a business

Ottawa. Mother of two invented environmentally-friendly pad that will soon be available on Amazon

JOE LOFARO
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An Ottawa mom may have the answer to every new parent's prayers.

Louise Miner invented the Rip n Go, a detachable, waterproof, machine-washable absorbent pad that prevents kids from soaking the bed overnight if they wet.

The environmentally-friendly product is already available for purchase at select Ottawa stores, but it may soon be more widely available as Miner's business is gearing up for wider distribution with retailers such as Amazon.

Louise Miner says her Rip n Go is removable with just one hand and it helps keep her two-year-old's bed dry at night. JOE LOFARO/METRO

Miner, a mother of two from the Ottawa suburb of Orleans, came up with the idea after her second child had bed wetting problems. She said her very tired husband one night put a towel down in their daughter's crib to keep it dry, but then she thought there must be a better and safer way.

That's when she designed the Rip n Go, whose best feature is the Velcro seal which keeps the padded sheet in place during sleep. A parent can rip then pad off with one hand and replace it with the fresh one without having to lift the mattress to change soiled bed sheets.

"At three o'clock in the morning, it's the last thing you want (to do)," said Miner.

"It was a huge lifesaver. I wasn't worrying because of something he might do because of his sleep deprivation."

The new company received mentorship support from Invest Ottawa, an economic development agency that helps local startups.

Miner also developed a version for kids aged three to nine years old which comes with matching bedding and pillow case.

There is also an adult version with a fitted sheet that remains in place with elastics under the mattress, so only the top pad needs to be replaced.

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VOICES

XMAS CARDS AGAINST HUMANITY

It's almost Christmas, and you probably forgot to mail out those cards again, which means right about now your friends are probably getting dancing elves in their inbox

PAUL SULLIVAN
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It's that time of year again.

You know, when you think about sending Christmas cards to friends and loved ones, but as one Canada Post deadline after another sails by, they stay in the box until next year, and they won't get sent then, either.

I'm not exactly sure what keeps them in the box. There are plenty of reasons, even without inertia. And inertia's good enough.

Someone should start Inertia Anonymous.

But Christmas cards are hard work.

First, you have to buy them, with all the decisions that implies.

Should they say Merry Christmas and offend friends who aren't Christian, or Happy Holidays and underwhelm everyone, including the non-Christians?

Should they be tasteful or should you go all Thomas Kinkaid, opting for fantasy frost and cozy kitsch and damn the torpedoes?

Should each purchase benefit the world's children?

Should the cards be made of 100 per cent re-chewed pulp?

OK, we've got the cards. Now we have to find actual addresses that require something called "postal codes."

Then we have to decide if we're going to subject everyone to the annual State of Christmas address or just write a cheery greeting followed by the appropriate number of xs and os. (Signing XXXOOO on the bank manager's card is obvious and embarrassing).

Unless all three of your children graduated this year from Harvard Medical School, you'll be hard-pressed to keep up with the competition, so it's wise just to jot a thoughtful note, such as: "It's been a long time since we got together. Are you still alive?"

Once you've addressed and written the cards, next come the stamps. If you've been out of the snail-mail slow lane for a while, you're in for a shock: The price of stamps has gone up to a buck apiece.

This is a million per cent increase over last year, when it cost 63 cents. If you send out 20 cards, which you will do according to a Canada Post poll, that's $20 bucks for just being thoughtful.

Of course, the deadline for getting the cards delivered by Christmas expired in October, which means you and your friends will be exchanging face-saving Christmas cards well into April.

It's enough to make you give up and send images of creepy dancing elves to all your virtual acquaintances via email, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and various other stress-inducing electronic bombardments.

But despite all the nonsense that goes with the cardboard artifacts, Britons send a billion a year, Americans 1.4 billion.

And while that number is down from 1.9 billion in 2009, the generation known as Millennials have shown a heart-warming tendency to include Christmas cards along with vinyl records, robust facial hair and artisanal this or that in their quest for the lost authenticity of the ancients. So I will persevere. Starting with the box I bought in 2009, I pledge to send out cards in time for Christmas 2015. H0H 0H0!

Surviving your family: Booze, Ativan and other tips

REBECCA KOHLER
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Oh man, it's that time of year again: Christmas! Or Hanukkah! Or what ever word it is you use to define "awkward family gathering."

Don't get me wrong, I love Christmas and, for the most part, I love my family. But there's a reason that when I prepare myself a festive beverage people often ask, "Did you want some eggnog in that bourbon?"

I need that drink to aid in the circumnavigation of uncomfortable questions, buried family tensions and the fact that I'm now wearing a feather boa because my Aunt Lois thought it was, "Perfect for me."

I'm not saying drinking is the answer. Ativan helps too. But if substances aren't your thing, there are other ways to help yourself through the labyrinth of emotional grenades that Christmas day can bring.

For instance, if you're a woman, you may be asked a lot of questions about your womb.

Few win the next-of-kin lottery

If you have a perfect family with no bad breath or passive-aggressive mothers, then I want you to know how lucky you are.

What's it doing? What's it thinking? It must be so dusty in there! First, you need to let these questions/comments roll off your back as if it were covered in baby oil (an oil you'd know more about if you had a baby!).

Remember, it's a common misconception that all women want/can have babies and your family member is just trying to tap into some common ground.

They don't know that you have reproductive issues, or you're single or that you'd rather eat out of a garbage can than have a kid, so don't get mad or uncomfortable, just deflect. Make a joke like, "My womb is thinking what my stomach's thinking: Where's the turkey?!" Everyone will laugh and you'll distract prying eyes from the fact that you cry yourself to sleep every night with your cat.

Then there's always the "How's work?" question. This one can really be a stinker.

Maybe you don't like your job, or your job (in the eyes of others) is subpar, or maybe — and this is where family gatherings are really tricky — maybe your job is amazing and you're a millionaire and you just got a promotion, but the cousin who asked you about it is on disability because he got his finger stuck in the fryer at McDonald's.

This is a no-win situation. You don't want to rub success in the nose of the unsuccessful and yet any failure you admit to will be gobbled up by your bitter relatives like a fried schadenfreude hors d'oeuvre.

So what to do? You can try something like, "The best part about work is that we're not there right now. Am I right, Cousin Jimmy?" and then pat him on the back. If he persists, feign stomach cramps and run to the bathroom. Diarrhea shuts everyone up.

And then there's just the family. Your great aunt with the breath that smells like a dilapidated tuna factory. Your weird uncle who always tries to kiss you a little too close to the mouth.

There are the nieces and nephews who are so cute for twenty minutes and then you wish you had some Ambien For Kids. The combination of turkey and wine have left you with the inability to move, yet you're stuck on the couch beside your mother who won't stop commenting on how "Round your face is looking."

By the way, if you have a perfect family with no bad breath or passive-aggressive mothers, then I want you to know how lucky you are. Go to your holiday gatherings and hug your family extra tight, because you must have won the next-of-kin lottery. I'll bet you have perfect teeth too. How nice for you.

For the rest of us, the question is: Why do we do this? Is it for the gifts? The food? Is it for Jesus? Well, call me a sap, but I think it's for love. Because while all of this sounds awful, and all the people I'm going to see make me want to book an emergency appointment with my therapist, I love them. Does that make love sound gross and weird? Yes! And I wouldn't have it any other way.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!!!!

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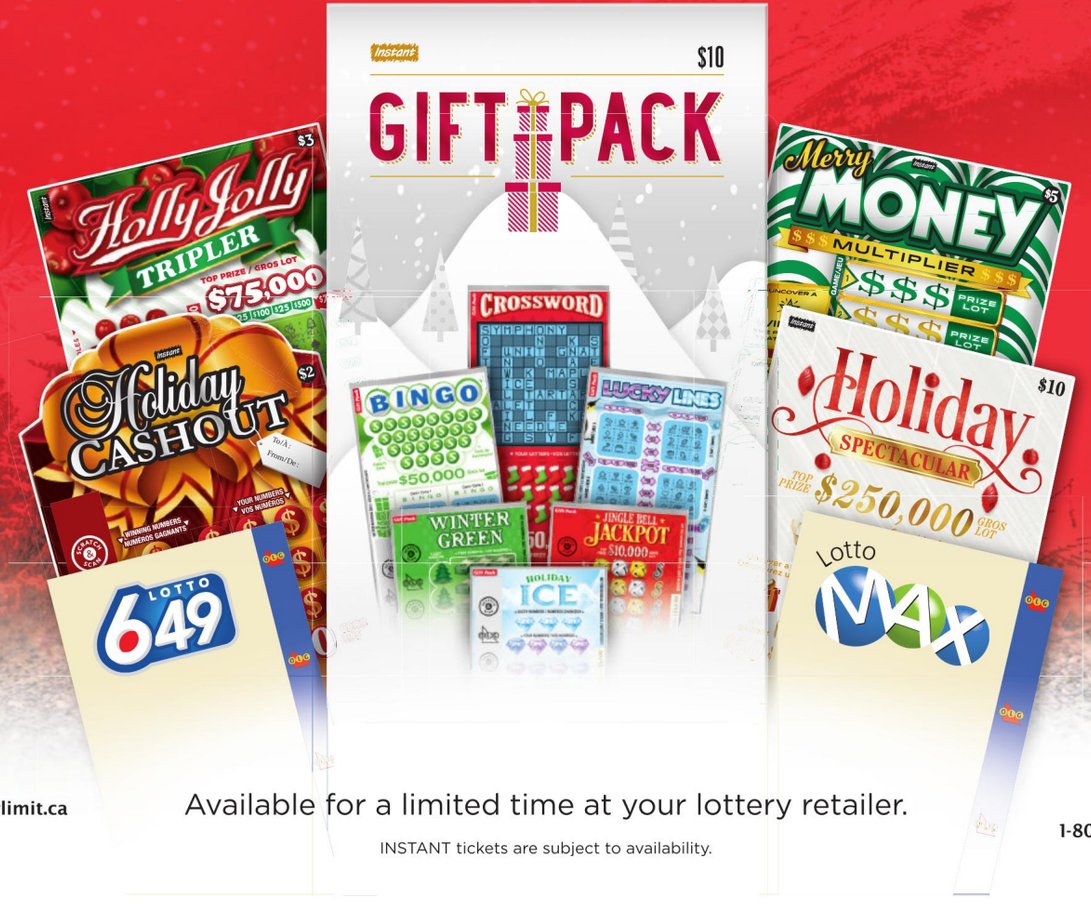

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METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Mel B ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Issues with mom may have led Mel B to mix meds: Source

Whoa. So last week, former Spice Girl Mel B (real name Melanie Brown) missed a taping of the British version of X Factor after heading to the hospital because of stomach pains. But now it turns out that was a bit of a fib.

A source tell Radar Online that Brown "was hospitalized because she mixed tranquilizers, including Xanax, with alcohol. It was absolutely accidental and not intentional. She wasn't suicidal, but the pressure of being back in London brought a lot of unresolved issues to the surface concerning being estranged from her mother, Andrea, and the rest of her family."

Dang, source, ease off with the oversharing. You could've just left it at "not intentional." Brown has reportedly been holed up in a London hotel with her daughters since leaving the hospital and has been cleared by doctors to return to the U.S.

A plot twist involving prosthetics sees Pitt pounce on the Hannibal exit

Michael Pitt

Michael Pitt is apparently all done with Hannibal and won't be returning for the show's third season, but that doesn't mark the end of his character, meat-packing magnate Mason Verger. Pitt will be replaced by Across the Universe star Joe Anderson, and hopefully fans won't notice the difference. I mean, he ended Season 2 doing some pretty grisly things to his own face, meaning lots of stomach-turning prosthetics, so it just might work. Sources say Pitt made the decision to leave the show, probably seeing his character's intense facial mutilation as the perfect opportunity to do so. Oh, and Anderson posted a pretty alarming photo of himself in full Verger makeup on the character's Instagram account, so now we kind of see Pitt's point.

Cox loved Beyoncé's Christmas card like XO

Laverne Cox

Orange is the New Black star Laverne Cox totally wins the relatability award this year for her perfectly measured and understandable reaction to receiving a Christmas card from Beyoncé. I mean, it's a Christmas card from Beyoncé. Cox posted a shot of the signature to Instagram, explaining, "So when I opened this holiday card a few days ago and read 'Love Beyoncé,' I literally fell to the floor. I was on the floor of my apartment. I have witnesses." Don't worry, we believe you.

She also writes, "Thanks Bey for the gift" and includes an image of a sweatshirt emblazoned with Cake by the Pound. It's unclear whether the item is said gift — I mean, it would make sense, right? — but the important thing is I would like to know more about this cake by the pound policy. Where do I sign up?

Steven Tyler, right, and Joe Perry of Aerosmith openly fight with each other, but keep working together. AFP FILE

It's the Same Old Song and Dance for Aerosmith

Feuds and music.
Singer Steven Tyler and guitarist Joe Perry stick together despite their ongoing tensions

The rock music world is notorious for its bickering, but Aerosmith belongs to another category altogether — a band with constant and open tensions that has nonetheless managed to stay together.

The friction between guitarist Joe Perry and singer Steven Tyler shows no signs of mellowing with age, with the two Boston rockers both releasing tell-all books that portray each other in a less than flattering light.

Since his memoir Rocks came out in October, Perry says he has only exchanged text messages with his bandmate of 40 years.

"It kind of bounced back and forth a bit. He got about a third of the way through the book and said he liked it, and then I didn't hear from him, but obviously he finished it," Perry told AFP.

Perry said he had fully expected Tyler, who criticized his bandmate in his own book in 2011, to take exception to parts of the memoir that portray the singer as controlling and self-promoting.

Among the allegations, Perry says that Tyler used to make a habit of stealing, and that several years ago he quietly tried out — unsuccessfully — to sing for a reunited Led Zeppelin. Perry said he knew from the first time they met that he and Tyler had differences, but that they had found a way to work together after splitting in the late 1970s.

"We had to figure out a new dynamic instead of just fighting all the time, to put the personal stuff aside, and let our differences as far as the music go work for us, instead of being a point of contention," Perry said.

Perry isn't sure whether he and Tyler will ever talk about the guitarist's book. But, Perry said, he expects it will be "business as usual" the next time they meet.

In one difference, Perry said that he never took up the rock 'n' roll lifestyle when it came to sex. In the book, he recounts once watching Aerosmith's merchandise vendor pour whiskey over a body part he had christened Mr. Important in an unscientific bid to prevent venereal disease.

Perry, raised in a small town in Massachusetts, said he generally stayed with one woman at a time. "That's what I saw when I was growing up and it just seemed natural to me. I didn't really have this need to prove myself, to bring more notches to my pistol so to speak," he said. "I was the odd man out because I wasn't into that kind of lifestyle. But I was always a loner anyway, so it didn't bother me much."

Perry returns to his family roots on a new solo EP of Christmas songs, performing holiday classics that he enjoyed as a child.

Johnny Depp lent him a studio to record Joe Perry's Merry Christmas and wound up joining on rhythm guitar for a version of Chuck Berry's Run Run Rudolph. Perry said that Depp "really added some flavour" both artistically and by allowing a live recording of the song, as Perry would otherwise have played both guitar parts and mixed them. AFP

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Let's all eat, drink and be healthy

Tips. How to enjoy all the yuletide offerings without paying for it in the New Year

When you sit down for Christmas dinner, there's a few easy ways to keep it healthy. ISTOCK

There will be a lot of overeating over the holidays.

There are all those high-cal foods that family traditions link to holiday celebrations. Eggnog (cream plus eggs plus sugar plus alcohol). Mashed potatoes whipped with cream cheese and plenty of butter. Gravy. So much gravy.

Given that the holidays are a season of excess and traditional holiday foods are highly calorific, we asked dietary experts how to contain the damage. Specifically: If there is one thing to cut out to make the feasting less excessive, what should it be?

Surprisingly, several of our experts did not advise eliminating a particular food. And a number didn't even frown on the idea of seasonal indulgence. But they did offer some suggestions to contain the calories.

"I'd say that if overeating is ever allowed, that it is allowed for the major festivities that occur a few times a year — provided food intake is controlled the rest of the time," says Thomas Wolever, a professor in University of Toronto's department of nutritional sciences.

Wolever says overeating by 2,500 calories — in other words, doubling an average daily intake — on three days a year can be offset by cutting back 20 calories per day for the other 362 days.

Len Piche suggests focusing on portions and finding low-calorie options.

Savour foods slowly, using smaller servings on smaller plates to help limit the calories, says Piche, a nutrition professor at Western University's Brescia University College.

Drink water before a meal. Don't skip breakfast or lunch to focus on a big dinner.

"Trying to 'save yourself' for big meals by skipping meals earlier in the day might backfire. You may develop a ravenous appetite and end up eating more calories than you normally would," Piche says.

Rena Mendelson, a professor of nutrition at Ryerson University in Toronto, also offers some tips that might help you control your calorie intake better at a big holiday meal.

"Before you go to a holiday party, have a bowl of soup and avoid any of the pre-meal treats as they tend to be very high in calories," she says.

"Eat the main meal and have enough to feel satisfied but not overfed. This may help to limit the dessert course... ."

Watch your liquid calories, suggests Dr. Yoni Freedhoff, a professor of obesity medicine at the University of Ottawa.

"If I were to pick one thing to ditch, it would be the sweet stuff as many a home has the tradition of sugary soda for festive meals," he says.

One dietary expert did recommend a food item to cut. And Dr. David Jenkins acknowledges his nomination may qualify him for the role of the Grinch. Jenkins suggests cutting whatever the main meat dish is in your holiday dinner.

It's not that Jenkins thinks it's the least healthy. It's that pulling out the linchpin, so to speak, would fundamentally change our approach to the meal. He thinks with the planet's expanding population, climate change and the obesity epidemic, it's time to start thinking about eating in a more sustainable way.

"It would be a radical change in the 'sit-down-and-gorge' concept that's the centre of Christmas," says Jenkins, a researcher at Toronto's St. Michael's Hospital who studies the effects on cholesterol and health of eating more plant-based foods and fewer processed food products.

"It forces people to think about other options," he says of his recommendation. "They may think, hopefully, of more environmentally friendly options. They may think of more plant-based diets.

"They may, in fact, forgo a large meal and do some snowboarding. ... I think that we've got to start thinking about other things at Christmas than sitting down and getting comfort food." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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This recipe serves 12. MATTHEW MEAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gingerbread taste in a trifle

Holiday dessert. Layer a classic Christmas staple for a more sophisticated treat that will satisfy any sweet tooth at your table

Ingredients

Vanilla bean pudding
- 4 cups whole milk
- 1 vanilla bean
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/3 cup cornstarch
- 4 eggs
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

Orange-black pepper caramel
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 4 tbsp (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup light cream
- Pinch of sea salt
- 1 tsp ground black pepper (more or less, to taste)
- Zest of 1 orange

Trifle
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 loaf (about 1 1/2 pounds) purchased or homemade ginger bread, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/2 cup finely chopped crystallized (candied) ginger

Gingerbread is such an iconic flavour, and aroma, of Christmas, yet it can be a letdown as a dessert for the big day.

It's mostly because a gingerbread, no matter how delicious, is kind of simple for such a day of big celebrations.

So jazz it up a bit, turning your basic gingerbread into a far more festive trifle layered with a rich vanilla pudding and orange-black pepper caramel.

For ease, this impressive dessert can be prepped a day ahead. And if you're hitting the road at the holiday, it also travels very well.

1. In a medium saucepan over medium, heat the milk until scalded (bring it just to the boiling point), then remove from the heat. Split the vanilla bean lengthwise and scrap the seeds into the milk.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together the sugar and cornstarch. Add the eggs and beat until completely smooth and no trace of egg lumps or sugar remains. When the milk is scalded, while whisking the egg mixture, pour half of the hot milk in a thin stream into the bowl. Pour the egg-milk mixture back into the saucepan of remaining milk.

3. Return the mixture to the stove and, whisking continuously and scraping the bottom and corners of the pan, cook over medium heat until the mixture comes to a simmer and thickens. Return pudding to the bowl and whisk in the butter. Press a sheet of plastic wrap directly onto the surface of the pudding and refrigerate until chilled.

4. Meanwhile, make the caramel. In a medium saucepan, combine the brown sugar, butter, cream, salt and black pepper. Bring to a simmer over medium heat and cook, stirring continuously, until slightly thickened, about 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the orange zest, then set aside and cool to room temperature.

5. When pudding and caramel have cooled, prepare to assemble the trifle. In a large bowl, use an electric mixer to beat the heavy cream to medium peaks, about 3 to 5 minutes. Divide the chilled pudding in three portions, then gently fold the whipped cream into one of the portions of the pudding.

6. Arrange a third of the gingerbread cubes in an even layer in the bottom of a trifle dish. Drizzle with a third of the caramel sauce, then sprinkle a third of the chopped ginger over that. Spread one of the plain pudding thirds (not the batch mixed with cream) over the ginger, then repeat the layering with the remaining ingredients.

7. Finish the trifle by topping it with the cream-pudding mixture. Refrigerate for 2 hours before serving.

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Raptors gored by Rose and the Bulls

Bulls guard Derrick Rose shoots over Raptors Amir Johnson, right, and Terrence Ross on Monday night in Chicago. Rose scored 29 points on 12 of 19 shooting and Jimmy Butler had 27 points, 11 rebounds and five blocks in the Bulls' 129-120 win. Kyle Lowry had a game-high 34 points for the Raptors, who had their six-game winning streak snapped. CHARLES REX ARBOGAST/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Henry cleared for move across pond

Soccer. Brampton defender has work permit approved for transfer to West Ham

Doneil Henry is about to join the select list of Canadians to play in England's Premier League.

The 21-year-old former Toronto FC defender from Brampton had his work permit approved Monday, paving the way for a move to West Ham United in January.

The east London side currently stands fourth with a 9-4-4 record.

"Absolutely fantastic news for Doneil," said former Toronto FC manager Ryan Nelsen, who recommended the Canadian international to West Ham boss Sam Allardyce. "I know how hard he's worked and the effort he put in."

Nelsen, a big Henry backer, captained Blackburn Rovers under Allardyce.

Former Toronto FC defender Doneil Henry will join the likes of Jim Brennan, Craig Forrest and Terry Dunfiel as Canadians having played top-tier soccer.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

English reports pegged the West Ham transfer fee at $2.7 million.

West Ham had to make its case for a permit before an appeals hearing. Canada's lowly world ranking — currently No. 112 — makes it difficult to secure the proper paperwork in England.

Henry will join fellow Canadian Junior Hoilett (Queens Park Rangers) in England's top flight. The Brampton-born Hoilett has yet to declare his international allegiance, however.

Other Canadians to play in the top tier include Jim Brennan, Terry Dunfield, David Edgar, Craig Forrest, Simeon Jackson, Jimmy Nicholl, Tomasz Radzinski, Paul Stalteri and Frank Yallop.

Calgary-born Owen Hargreaves also played in the Premier League but opted to suit up internationally for England.

The move caps an eventful year for Henry, whose sale to a Cypriot club was shrouded in secrecy for months.

Toronto confirmed in August that Henry had been sold to the Cyprus club in March/April, only to be immediately loaned back to the MLS team. Neither Toronto nor Henry would initially name the team, later identified as Apollon Limassol.

Henry, who has made no secret of his desire to play in Europe, spent 2 1/2 weeks training with West Ham prior to the 2014 MLS season.

"They liked him and a lot of other clubs really liked him as well," Nelsen said Monday from his native New Zealand.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA

Woeful Pistons waive Smith

Stan Van Gundy kept Detroit's awkward core of frontcourt players together during his first offseason as team president, hoping the Pistons would show signs of improvement without any drastic moves.

Josh Smith
GETTY IMAGES

Now Detroit is 5-23. Time for a shake-up.

The Pistons waived forward Josh Smith, less than halfway through the lucrative four-year contract he signed before the 2013-14 season. Van Gundy, who is also Detroit's coach, said he wants to develop younger players.

The 29-year-old forward's poor perimeter shooting has been a problem for Detroit, but he does fill up the stat sheet. He's averaging 7.2 rebounds and a career-best 4.7 assists per game this season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA

"There could be an argument, and a strong argument, to starting our season later."

ABC's NBA analyst Jeff Van Gundy explaining that starting the NBA season on Christmas Day would "avoid a lot of the NFL and college football season." Football is quiet on Christmas, so the NBA loads up.

Premier League

Terry scores in 2-0 win over Stoke

John Terry scored his first league goal of the season to help Chelsea beat Stoke 2-0 Monday and restore its three-point lead atop the Premier League.

Terry put his side ahead in just the second minute with a powerful header from a corner, and Cesc Fabregas doubled the lead in the 78th to make sure Chelsea re-established the gap on second-place Manchester City. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stephane Robidas: The Leafs 'surrogate coach'

Veteran wisdom.
'Be yourself' just one of many lessons the 37-year-old doles out to his teammates

Stephane Robidas in action for Toronto. The veteran is a "true leader" with the Leafs, says assistant coach Steve Spott. ABELIMAGES/GETTY IMAGES FILE

When Stephane Robidas learned he'd be a healthy scratch on Sunday in Chicago, he walked over to Jake Gardiner to offer words of encouragement to the struggling defenceman, who was taking his spot in the Maple Leafs' lineup.

"I just wished him good luck, told him to go out there and have fun," said Robidas, the 37-year-old veteran. "(I told him) 'Do what you do best. Be yourself.' Sometimes when you try to do well and do the right thing, sometimes you think too much. Just play to your abilities."

They were words well-spoken, showing the kind of character player — the quintessential "good guy in the room" — the Leafs were hoping for when they signed Robidas to a three-year deal in July.

"He's a surrogate coach," said Leafs assistant coach Steve Spott. "His leadership, his experience. When he says something, he means something. He's just a true leader."

Robidas will be back in the lineup Tuesday night in Dallas to face the team he played more than 700 games for during 11 of his 14 seasons in the NHL.

"It's going to be special coming back (to Dallas)," said Robidas. "It's where my kids were born, most of my career was spent here. It was like home for me."

Coming off a broken leg as the trade deadline approached last season, he was informed by Stars general manager Jim Nill a couple of teams were after him and he'd probably get traded.

"My son (Justin) took it really hard," said Robidas. "He was really upset. He had a Dallas Stars app on his phone. He deleted it right away. It was a tough move, but for them now, they're happy. It's part of life." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Not exactly a cowboy

"I don't say 'y'all,' but I do enjoy Mexican restaurants."

Stephane Robidas on his 11 seasons at Dallas.

NHL mumps outbreak

Penguins sit out two more

The Pittsburgh Penguins just can't shake it off.

Backup goaltender Thomas Greiss and forwards Brandon Sutter and Steve Downie were sent to testing for the virus.

Teammates Sidney Crosby, Beau Bennett and Olli Maatta have already dealt with the illness, as have another dozen NHLers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Senators

Capitals' Holtby holds Sens 2-1

Braden Holtby made 38 saves, Jay Beagle and Nicklas Backstrom scored second-period goals, and the Washington Capitals extended their point streak to nine games with a 2-1 win over the Ottawa Senators on Monday.

Washington has won three in a row and is 7-0-2 in nine games. Holtby has been in net for all of them. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

$42M US guaranteed

Hughes, Twin OK five-year deal

Phil Hughes finished his first season in Minnesota one out shy of a $500,000 bonus. His new deal with the Twins more than takes care of that.

The Twins and the 28-year-old right-hander agreed Monday to a $58 million, five-year contract that adds $42 million in guaranteed money from 2017-19. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paid to trade Kemp

Dodgers owe $18M to Padres

The Los Angeles Dodgers owe the Padres $18 million next year as part of the $32 million they agreed to pay in last week's trade that sent outfielder Matt Kemp to San Diego.

L.A. will give San Diego six $3-million installments in 2015, payable on the first of each month during regular season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Sens rookie Lazar named captain of Canadian juniors

'Very honoured'. B.C. centre regarded as an upbeat competitor

Curtis Lazar has every reason to be smiling.

The always good-humoured Ottawa Senators rookie on Monday was named captain of Canada's junior hockey team for the upcoming world championship in Toronto and Montreal.

"I'm very honoured to have this opportunity, and I'm going to take full advantage of it and go out there and play hard for my country," Lazar told reporters at a hockey charity event in Montreal. "I know there's a lot of responsibility that comes along with this, but I'm just going to try to take it in stride and be myself."

Canada's coaching staff gave Lazar the news Monday morning, shortly after the team arrived in Montreal from Ottawa, where Canada beat Sweden 5-2 in an exhibition game on Sunday. True to character, the Salmon Arm, B.C., native was grinning from ear to ear when he was told.

"As usual, I was smiling," said the 19-year-old, who was drafted 17th overall by the Senators in 2013. "It's pretty cool. I didn't know it was coming. Anyone could have it. I'm very honoured that my peers and my coaching staff think very highly of me.

"I'm a pretty positive guy for the most part. I'm always smiling and trying to keep the guys light. I like to lead by example. I really focus on little details, and I think that goes a long way.

"I want unity within the dressing room. Regardless of where you're from in Canada, we're part of a team now. No one is bigger than the team."

Lazar, who has a goal and six assists in 27 games with Ottawa this season, was lent to Canada by the Senators last week. He is one of seven returning players from last year's tournament in Malmo, Sweden, where Canada finished fourth.

One year later, Lazar is thinking of redemption.

"I was disappointed with how we played last year and the result we got," he said, looking back on Canada's semifinal loss against Finland, and the defeat to Russia in the bronze-medal game. "Second chances don't come around too often. We're fortunate to have this chance."

Connor McDavid of the Erie Otters and Sam Reinhart of the Kootenay Ice will serve as alternate captains for the tournament, which officially gets underway on Dec. 26.

McDavid and Reinhart also represented Canada at the 2014 junior championship and were teammates at the 2013 under-18 world championship, where the Canadians won the gold medal. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"They're great young men, they want to win, they're great hockey players and they want to make a difference. This is what you need in your leadership group."

Team Canada head coach Benoit Groulx on captain Curtis Lazar and alternates Connor McDavid and Sam Reinhart

Curtis Lazar speaks during a team availability in Montreal, Monday. Lazar has been named captain of Canada's national junior hockey team.
GRAHAM HUGHES/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Next big thing gets top marks for his character

According to some hockey insiders, Connor McDavid's skills are matched only by his character. DAVID VAN DYKE/METRO

Will Connor McDavid be better than Sidney Crosby? Could he possibly be better than Wayne Gretzky?

While the hockey world is having that debate now with the world junior hockey championship coming up, these questions weren't what preoccupied Mark Seidel two years ago in Drummondville, Que. The veteran scout was entranced by the coming and goings of a 15-year-old McDavid playing at the world under-17s.

Anyone and his grandmother could see how special McDavid's on-ice talents were, but it wasn't what he did on the ice that had Seidel transfixed. It was off the ice where McDavid's stature grew in the scout's eyes — how the phenom interacted with young fans, some in wheelchairs.

"Body language is a big thing with me," says Seidel, a talent evaluator for nearly two decades. "I like to see how people interact to see if they're legit or whether they're coached up, or what they are like when the cameras are off."

What he saw from McDavid, who was talking and playing with developmentally delayed kids, impressed him.

"You could see he genuinely enjoyed interacting with young kids," Seidel adds. "He was just a guy. He wasn't looking for cameras. You got the sense that he really enjoyed being there. He wasn't doing it because he thought he should or it was his duty. It was just the right thing to do."

That, more than his play, is the story of McDavid.

Sure, the 17-year-old forward will be the centrepiece of Canada's offence at the world juniors, starting Boxing Day in Montreal and Toronto. Sure, he'll likely be the No. 1 pick for some lucky NHL team, a face of the franchise and cornerstone to build on. But it's the combination of hockey skill and character — unselfish, humble — that draws comparisons to Crosby and even Gretzky.

"I've had a lot of players with a lot of ability that I wish had more character," says Sherry Bassin, GM and owner of McDavid's OHL club, the Erie Otters, "and I've had a lot of players with a lot of character that I wish had more ability. You put them both together, you get Connor McDavid."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Earning respect

As for that November fight that left McDavid with a broken hand, well, the anti-fighting crowd didn't like it, but within hockey circles it earned the Otters star high marks.

- "He's a guy that will solve his own problems," talent evaluator Mark Seidel says. "He's not looking at the bench for help. He's not a self-entitled kid."

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5 Dark-horse players to watch at the WJC

You'll be inundated with coverage of the Connor McDavids, Jack Eichels and Curtis Lazars of the world juniors for the next couple weeks, but who should you watch for when the best of the best aren't on the ice? Here are a few up-and-comers to keep an eye on when the tournament starts Boxing Day.

CAM TUCKER
Metro in Vancouver

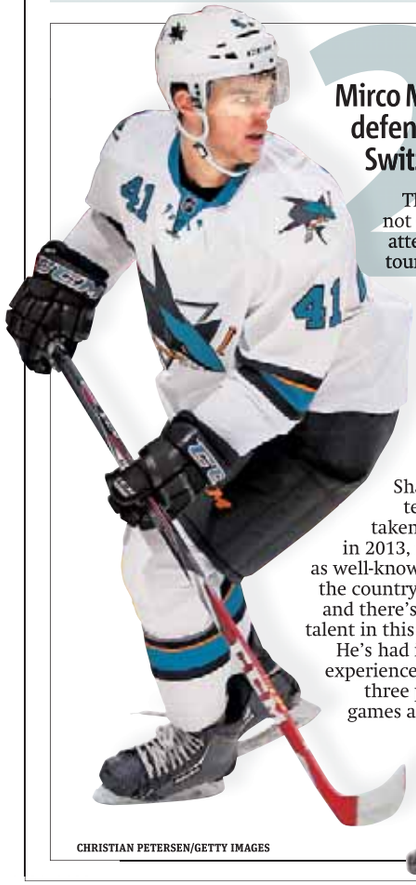
1

STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Max Domi, forward, Canada

Max Domi, like his father Tie, isn't the biggest guy on the ice. But he has possessed an ability to produce offensively throughout his entire junior hockey career with the London Knights. He's also formed instant chemistry playing on a line with Anthony Duclair, who has appeared in 18 games for the NHL's New York Rangers this season. Early in the pre-tournament games, those two players have arguably been Canada's best up front.

2



CHRISTIAN PETERSEN/GETTY IMAGES

Mirco Mueller, defenceman, Switzerland

The Swiss may not garner much attention in this tournament. But they do have a defenceman with NHL experience in Mirco Mueller, who has played in 24 games with the San Jose Sharks. Like his team, Mueller, taken 18th overall in 2013, might not be as well-known because of the country he plays for, and there's plenty more talent in this tournament. He's had international experience before, with three points in five games at a U-18 competition.

3

NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ilya Sorokin, goalie, Russia

Not sure if he counts as an unknown figure in this tournament after the pre-tournament performance he had against Team Canada, but Russian goalie Ilya Sorokin joined the Russian camp from the KHL. Drafted in the third round by the New York Islanders, he was not among the goaltenders for Russia at last year's tournament. Though if he plays like he did in a 52-save effort against Canada last week, it will be difficult to beat the Russians.

4

Thatcher Demko, goalie, United States

Thatcher Demko didn't get the chance to play in a game for the U.S. junior team in last year's competition, but he could certainly challenge for the starting role in 2015. Drafted in the second round by the Vancouver Canucks, he stopped all 14 shots faced in the opening half of the first pre-tournament game for the Americans. Many eyes will be on U.S. forward Jack Eichel, who could challenge Connor McDavid to go first overall next June. But strong goaltending could make the U.S. a golden contender.

BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

5

BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

Kasperi Kapanen, forward, Finland

Drafted 22nd overall by the Pittsburgh Penguins in June, Kasperi Kapanen, the son of former NHL forward Sami Kapanen, has represented Finland before on the international stage, but never in the world junior championship. He missed that opportunity in 2014 due to injury. The Finns are the defending gold-medal champs, but are expected to be led offensively by Kapanen, who is having a breakout year in SM liiga.

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AUGMENTED REALITY

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→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Saturn's influence over the next few days will encourage you to think before you act. If you are going to be ruthless, be ruthless with yourself.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Try not to scatter your energy in too many directions because it's unlikely you will be able to maintain the pace. Focus on the one thing that matters most to you.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
The changes that take place over the next few days will work in your favour in the long term. If you take a risk it may well pay off but don't expect instant profit or pleasure.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
If someone tries to interfere in your personal affairs you must let them know you're not having it. Sometimes you have to act tough from the start and this is one of those times.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
A breakthrough is about to occur. Your rivals may say you have been lucky but you just worked harder than they did.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
There is so much you want to accomplish but if you are smart you will set realistic goals, both for this week and for the new year. Take each day as it comes.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Don't worry if others poke holes in your plans. You don't need anyone's permission to follow your dreams. Go it alone if you have to.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Travel and social activities will be fun over the holidays but the ride won't always be smooth. Plan ahead and give yourself plenty of time.

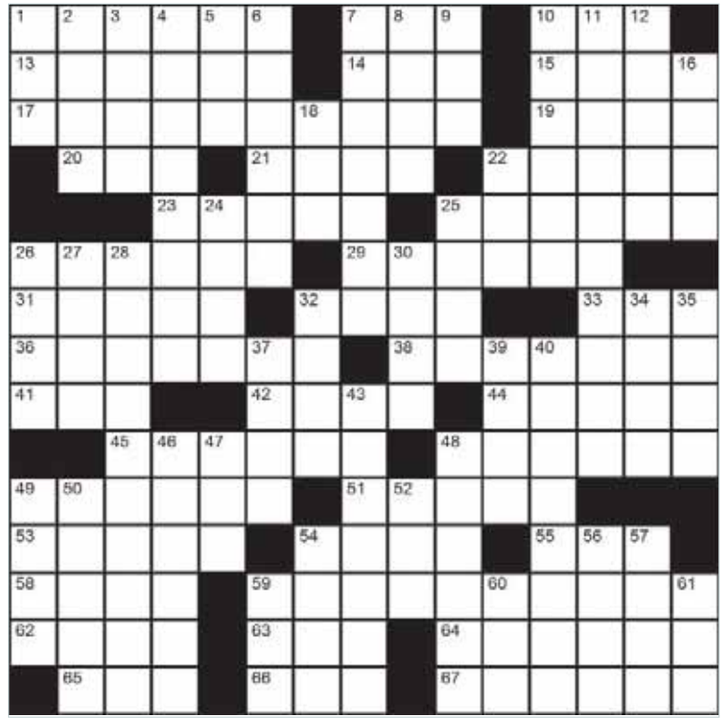
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Saturn's move into your sign marks the start of a two-year phase that will test you. The good news is you can handle whatever life throws at you.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
The tougher the task the more you like it but with Saturn moving into the most sensitive area of your chart those tasks won't always be physical. Get your head together and everything else will fall into place.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Don't let others pressure you into accepting an offer you have no way of knowing is right for you. It could mean a lot more work for little return.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
If you find it hard to discuss things in a civilized manner with certain people then the best thing to do is to stay out of their way.

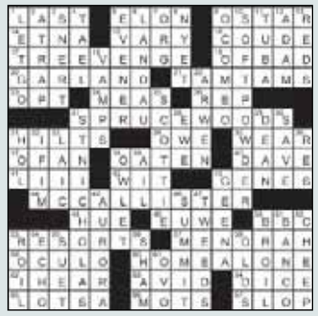
Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



Across
1. Canadian voicer of Rudolph in 1964 TV classic "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer", __ Mae Richards (b.1921 - d.2010)
7. Big name in trucks
10. AOL exchanges
13. "Christmas Is Coming" bit: "Please put a penny in __ __ man's hat."
14. Hawaii's Mauna __
15. Orchestra instrument
17. #1-Across... King Moonracer is a what?: 2 wds.
19. Norway's capital
20. Tic-__-Toe
21. Superlative suffix
22. More abundant
23. "__ we all?"
25. Cherry: French
26. Applied lightly
29. Shoelace-insertion spot
31. "Must Be Santa" part: "Who wears boots and _ __ of red..."
32. Singleton
33. Audi models
36. Far: 2 wds.
38. Crafty Christmas garland material
41. Ship's stern
42. Taken: French
44. Level
45. Resident of The Buckeye State
48. Christmas sleigh pullers
49. Actor Ed's
51. Mr. Desman, Canadian singer
53. Category
54. Adjective's friend
55. Bother
58. Speck
59. Festive season exchange: 2 wds.
62. Fragrant flower
63. Wood sorrel
64. Evangeline's home
65. Comedian Tina
66. Atop, in verse
67. Rents again

Down
1. Texter's 'incidentally'
2. "_ __ the jackpot!!!"
3. Ms. Horne
4. Rustic place in the country: 2 wds.
5. 'Percent' suffix
6. Whirled in the water
7. Sparkle like tinsel
8. __ point
9. Tin
10. Ivory: French
11. Domain of #17-Across, Island of __ __
12. #1-Across... Toronto-born actor who is #46-Down's voice, Paul __
16. Legend
18. Mr. Dykstra
22. Faith [abbr.]
24. Network of nerves
25. Mackerel variety
26. Mr. Carvey
27. __ __ yet (So far)
28. Frosty the Snowman feature: 2 wds.
30. Slangy positives
32. Scot's 'odd'
34. Christmas __
35. Grads-to-be, briefly
37. Blood type, _ __.
39. Snow remover
40. Festival, as in Wintertime
43. To an extent: 3 wds.
46. As per #12-Down... Elf who wants to be a dentist
47. Pique
48. Airplane garage
49. Culture medium
50. __ __ Christmas plates
52. Beach structure
54. Naughty or __
56. Christmas carol: "Sleigh __"
57. Make a scarf
59. Gunk
60. Frozen pond surface
61. Tank filling

Yesterday's Crossword

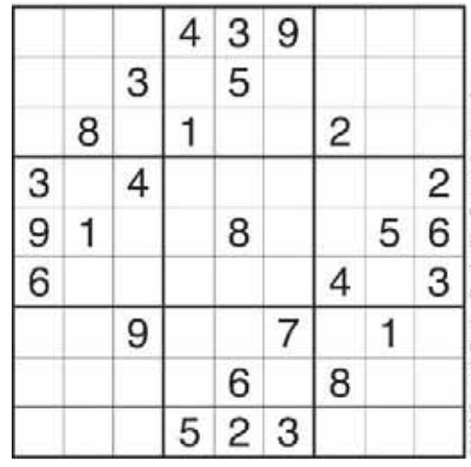


Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



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Yesterday's Sudoku

6	7	4	3	5	2	1	9	8
8	2	3	7	1	9	5	6	4
9	1	5	6	8	4	7	2	3
2	4	8	5	9	1	6	3	7
7	3	9	2	4	6	8	1	5
5	6	1	8	3	7	9	4	2
3	8	2	1	6	5	4	7	9
4	5	6	9	7	3	2	8	1
1	9	7	4	2	8	3	5	6

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